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# THE DUBLIN LITERARY GAZETTE,

OR

WEEKLY CHRONICLE OF CRITICISM, BELLES LETTRES, AND FINE ARTS.

No. 8.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 1830.

PRICE 9d.

## SKETCH.—No. IV.

### OUR VILLAGE AND ITS INHABITANT.

About twenty-eight miles from Dublin, on the high-road to Cork, is a village situated in a valley, wide in proportion to the height of the gentle hills that bound it. The name of one of these—*Mount-Bleak*—is somewhat inauspicious; another, on the opposite side of the valley, is called the *Nine-Tree Hill*; and, being conspicuous at a considerable distance, serves as a beacon to the approaching visitant. I have said that the village is on the high-road, but incorrectly: it is about a quarter of a mile removed from it; and this somewhat retired situation has been fancifully pronounced by some who love the people of the vale, as emblematic of their retiring virtues. The inn alone, and a small range of habitations adjoining, stand on the high-road, which here descends along the slope of *Mount-Bleak*. The village itself is approached by two avenues: one of these is a public road, which, previously to the rebellion of 1798, was embellished with trees, whereof a straggling few still remain; the other, although also a free thoroughfare, is private property, and leads to the dwelling of some of the most respected inhabitants. A babbling rivulet meanders through the valley. In the midst of the fields, which slope down from the high-road, is a square walled inclosure, surrounded internally by low pines. This is the *Friends' Burying Ground*; for a numerous colony of the sect miscalled Quakers, reside in the quiet vale. The little river (shall I be pardoned for calling it a *rivulet*?) washes no proud palace, no magnificent temple; yet there are simple structures along or near its banks, some of which are not unknown to fame, all the abode or resort of virtue—the *Mill*, the *Meeting-house*, the *School*, the *Retreat*, the *Post-office*.

Let not the cynic, or the worldling, sneer at the homeliness of these appellations. There are hundreds and hundreds by whom each place is considered a hallowed sanctuary—the *Post-office* in particular; for they knew the being who, for many a long year, discharged the duties of its mistress, sympathizing alike with those to whom she thus became the unwilling harbinger of sorrow, and those who rejoiced in the arrival of the packet that crowned their hopes, or surprised them with unexpected good tidings: but why trifle longer with my reader?—the “village” is *BALLITORE*—“its inhabitant” was *MARY LEADBEATER*.

It was my fortune in youth, to contract a friendship with a near relation of *Mary Leadbeater*. An invitation to *Ballitore* was one consequence of this intimacy. Few of those who have ever sojourned at the “*Village*” for their education, or as visitors, have neglected any opportunity of renewing these enjoyments, which result from an intercourse with its in-

habitants, or from the contemplation of the surrounding scenery: To the lover of nature, of literature, or of man, *Ballitore* presents no common attractions. In addition to its own local advantages, it lies in the vicinity of many beautiful and interesting spots. The high-road from Dublin passes through a country of a monotonous character, but there is another route, which forms one of the most delightful rambles in the province of *Leinster*. Leaving the metropolis by the charming outlet of *Rathmines*, the traveller follows a winding road, that leads him into the bosom of the Dublin, and subsequently of the *Wicklow* mountains. A beautiful succession of scenes, on which it would be irrelevant to expatiate, occur on his way—the *Dodder* (a river more lovely than its name,) and the adjacent village of *Rathfarnham*; *Mount Pelia* (a corruption of *Montpellier*), one of the most romantic of the Dublin hills. The sweet vale of *Glanismole*, (in English, “*Thrush-Glen*,”)—the wild mountain *Clackan* of *Ballinascorney*; the river *Liffey*, greeted as an old acquaintance by the perambulating cit; the *Three Castles*; the small but neat town of *Blessington*; *Russborough*, the seat of the *Earls of Milford*, rich in productions of the Italian pencil; the fine boisterous waterfall of *Poola-Phooka*, where the *Liffey* descends; and the villages of *Ballymore-Eustace* and *Dunlavan*.

Nor are the precincts of *Ballitore* Vale itself less interesting. Here are the ancient domains of the *Eustaces*, the *Keatings*, and the *Geraldines*, the baronial or manorial dwelling—

Once stern and strong in the pride of power,  
And awful still in its evening hour—

scenes, wherein the admirer of *Spenser* and *Ariosto* may revel in the dreamy delight of musing over their pages, when leisure and summer weather have won him for a season from the turmoil of city occupation. Here, too, are many a rath, and moat, and ruined abbey, for the enthusiast in Irish antiquities; even the hill of *Allen*, the resort of *Fin Mac Cool* and his merry-men, is at no great distance. However, I shall restrict myself to a glance at some of the most interesting spots, which lie within the compass of a summer day's ramble.

The seasons of refreshment at *Ballitore*, are patriarchal. Forth then betimes, thou who preferrest to the couch of sloth, the myriad delights of a sunshiny morning—that thou mayest return early in the afternoon to some hospitable-board, whence thou mayest again rise to behold the gay flaunting beams, gradually melting into that subdued and melancholy splendour, which renders the evening hour so agreeable to the pensive and contemplative spirit—forth I say, with some favourite volume in thy hand, some favourite friend, the partner of thy literary pursuits, at thy side; and, slung around thee, not a gun or a powder-pouch, but a bo-

tanical box; if mayhap, thou be one of those who love to dally with the floweret by the brook-side, on their way, and to trace in the minutest of his works, the wisdom and power of the Creator.

The castle of *Kilkea* forms a most agreeable object for a day's excursion. Built many centuries ago, by *John*, sixth *Earl of Kildare*,\* it still retains much of its strength and feudal dignity. The most direct road to it winds along a gentle ridge of hills, rising above the vale of *Ballitore*, through which winds the river already mentioned: the *Griese-Moone*, a sequestered spot, two miles distant from *Ballitore*, exhibits a striking contrast between dilapidation and improvement. On one side of the river stand congregated together, a square tower, such as is frequently met with along the English pale, the ruins of a *Franciscan* abbey, and a *Manor-house*, lately a more ghastly ruin itself. The abbey contains some curiously sculptured tombs; and in the adjoining cemetery is a fragment of a cross, whose rude carving of scriptural subjects, announces its antiquity. The opposite side of the river exhibits the embryo operations of a discreet and enterprising hand. At a short distance from *Moone*, is one of these artificial circular mounds, vulgarly called *raths*: this was chosen for a burial-ground, by a gentleman of the neighbourhood. Further on, the road merges in the avenue of *Belan*, the beautiful but neglected seat of the *Stratford* family. Those who love basking by wood and stream, in the sultry hours of summer, undisturbed by the intrusion of fashion—and frivolity, could hardly find a spot more appropriate: nor is the fountain of *Blandusia* itself (if it still exists,) more limpid and refrigerative, than yon crystal well with its pebbly bottom, surmounted by a wooden figure of *St. Patrick*.

The castle of *Kilkea*, although still inhabited, is but slightly modernized. The site is beautiful and lonely. The sweet still *Griese* washes its walls, which are surrounded by luxuriant trees. In the lawn, and exactly opposite to the entrance of the castle, are the scanty remains of an ancient church, with a burying-ground, involved in tangled foliage. An old flag-stone inserted in the embankment, records in Latin verse, not easily decipherable, some alliances of days gone by. There is a curious legend of one of the *Earls of Kildare*, connected with this castle. His sprite is supposed to visit it annually, or triennially, (I forget which), about midnight, riding on a horse shod with silver, like the presentation steed sent annually to the Pope, from the Court of *Naples*. The spectral *Earl* enters the castle mounted, ascends the stair-case to a narrow chamber wrought in the wall, wheels round, and departs. The term of his probation is to continue until the shoes be worn off the hoofs of his steed: by the last accounts, they are already

\* A.D. 1420.

as thin as a sixpence. The Earl generally resides in the mth of Mullomast, near Ballitore, the scene of the slaughter of Carmen, an event celebrated in verse, by Mary Leadbeater, and also by a gentleman of the Dublin University, now at the English bar.

The summit of the Nine-Tree-Hill, is a sort of natural observatory, like the Righi in Switzerland, albeit on a minor scale. From this eminence the eye takes in a great and varied expanse of country. Towards the East, is a fine chain of the Wicklow mountains, including Lugnaculliah, the highest in Ireland, with one exception, and a favourite excursion for the inhabitants of Ballitore. Towards the South, appear the hills about the rock of Dunamase, in the Queen's county, and those of Carlow. In the remote distance, rise Mount Leinster, Blackstairs, and the range of Slieve Bloom, mentioned in the Fairy Queen. Towards the west, extends a champaign country, wherein lies the Curragh of Kildare, with the round-tower and monastic ruins of old Kilculien, on the verge of the horizon. At the distance of two miles, is Grangecon, in the county of Wicklow, the seat of a gentleman possessed of a fine picture gallery, mineralogical cabinet, china-closet, &c.

Sweet Narraghmore! My last glance through the environs of Ballitore shall be directed towards thee; for never, during many wanderings, (and I have wandered through all the countries, from Calabria to Scandinavia,) have I seen anything in its way to compare with thy avenue—Narraghmore Avenue! Then the wood, and the little church beyond, and the mansion-house itself, in a state of decay, but commanding a prospect of exceeding beauty. Some years since, I visited the villa of its late proprietor, \* on the Lake of Como, and, wroth to say, the scenery of Narraghmore, (water apart,) needs not shrink from a comparison with the stately Italian landscape. The mansion, and an outer gate-way, are built in the Hispano-Moresco style—a fancy of the gentleman just alluded to, who, many years ago, travelled through Spain, and visited Morocco in a diplomatic capacity. "A mutilated bas-relief of Minerva, converted into the bulwark of a pig-stye, (*ne sus Minervam!*) and some heraldic fragments, scattered about the church-yard, attest the splendour that has long since waned away. The monument of the late proprietors' three daughters, sculptured by Canova, has not yet been erected. The handsome glebe-house, with its fine plantations, completes the attractions of Narraghmore.

Hitherto my task has been easy. It requires no great effort of the pen, to describe mountain and valley, lake and river, hamlet and homestead. Nor is it very difficult to pourtray the more shining qualities of mind, that stand forth in bright array like the features of a partially illumined landscape: but the unobtrusive virtues, whose silence is a part of their essence, which claim the mute panegyric of mental approbation, but shrink from the publicity attendant upon the labours of the press—he, who undertakes to unveil these, commences with the disheartening reflection that he is attempting to describe the non-descript; and it is only through the presumption that his efforts, how-

ever inadequate, may be serviceable to youthful and unsophisticated minds, that he is at all encouraged to proceed.

MARY LEADBEATER was grand-daughter to Abraham Shackleton, of Yorkshire, who founded the Ballitore School, and whose centenary was celebrated simultaneously in Dublin, Cork, Limerick, and elsewhere, on the 13th of March, 1820. "At this school," to adopt her own words, "the illustrious Burke was educated. He came hither in 1741, with his elder brother Garrett, and his younger Richard. He left Ballitore in 1744, and immediately entered T. C. D. He formed a friendship with R. S. [Richard Shackleton, father to Mary L.] son of his preceptor, which was never broken. He loved the scene of his childhood, and re-visited it with apparent delight. In his last visit, in 1786, he pointed out the ancient appearance of the village, recognized the situation of trees which had been felled, and of altered houses; and discovered the genuine, simple kindness of a heart, which neither years nor the contact with the world had chilled. Another pupil of the peaceful school-master, was the celebrated James Napper Tandy, who came to school in the year 1749. Matthew Young, who died a bishop, I forget of what place, came to school in 1763. He was, besides being a superior scholar, a most amiable man and boy. Michael Kearney, who died at a great age, I believe in 1814, was my grand-father's pupil. He was remarkable for literary attainment, and for his virtues and modesty. He came in 1743." The friendship of Edmund Burke was extended to the daughter of Richard Shackleton. She visited the statesman's family at Beaconsfield, and wrote a poem on the occasion, which drew forth a letter from his pen. This was, I believe, the only time she left Ireland; but she frequently journeyed from home to visit her friends and relations in remote parts of the country. The even tenor of her life was interrupted only by some domestic afflictions, except during the dreadful period of 1798; and "she slumbered away into the fields of peace,"\* as Klopstock beautifully expresses it, on the 27th of June, 1826.

Were I, after the manner of Plutarch, to select a parallel for the character under consideration, I should be inclined to refer to a small plaster cast now lying beside me. It is that of one whose virtues, although of the same unobtrusive character with Mary Leadbeater's, were, not many years ago, blazoned from one extremity of Europe to the other, owing to the peculiar mode of their developement. In another respect, as well as in the nature of their pursuits, my parallels differ. The FEMALE PESTALOZZI enjoyed, so long as infirmity allowed her to enjoy anything, all the comforts necessary for a mind, the very possession of which was affluence, while HENRY PESTALUTZ† perished in indigence. I would say of each min<sup>1</sup>, in the words of a favourite authoress, that "it possessed a loveliness to which no term of mere corporeal beauty can give a name; something of angelic purity, absence from guileful thought or suspicion of others, with all that is endearing in the bright and good of human kind."‡

\* In die Gefilde des Friedens  
Himmelschummele . . .

† The original Swiss name of Pestalozzi.

‡ See "Duke Christian of Luneburg," by Miss JANE FORSTER.

It was indeed this utter inaptitude for suspecting, this incapacity for thinking ill of her fellow-creatures, which distinguished Mary Leadbeater from all other persons with whom I have ever been acquainted. That this did not arise from want of discrimination is evident from the happiness wherewith she pourtrays the peculiarities of the Irish character, in her "Cottage Dialogues," and other works. Still, when the conviction of the baseness or worthlessness of an individual was forced upon her mind, she manifested a degree of incredulity as to the extent of his delinquency, which was visible upon her countenance even when she remained silent; and the avidity with which she seconded every effort at palliation, or extenuation, evinced the abundance of that *charity*, which was in her beautifully and richly personified.

Her attachment to literature was intense—her success as a writer considerable: and yet, although the popularity of her works procured her the acquaintance of many distinguished persons, her humility was such, that she not only submitted whatever she wrote to the scrutiny of friends, before publication, but quietly adopted such corrections as they proposed, without attempting a defence. Her printed works, which were numerous, are too well known to be adverted to in this article; but there are others which, owing to their local or personal nature, will never be submitted to the press, but which bear still more conspicuously the imprint of her character. She was one of the most delightful letter-writers that ever handled a pen. With the Rev. George Crabbe she corresponded for many years, and also with the Cumbrian bard, Thomas Wilkinson. The family of Elizabeth Smith, the author of the interesting "Fragments," resided for some time in Ballitore, at the *Retreat*, already mentioned. An intimacy was, on this occasion, formed between Mary Leadbeater and the mother of Elizabeth, which led to a frequent interchange of letters, after the Smiths returned to England. The late Dr. O'Beirne, Bishop of Meath, and the late philanthropic and talented William Lefanu, editor of "The Farmer's Journal," were among the number of her friends. Miss Edgworth furnished notes to her "Cottage Dialogues." A lady of rank and genius,\* who was also a writer, and whose benevolence has endeared her memory to the inhabitants of Ballitore, near which she possessed considerable landed property, was one of her most attached and regular correspondents. The grateful office of adjudging prizes to the deserving among this lady's tenantry, who were rewarded periodically in proportion to the neatness of their cottages, devolved on Mary Leadbeater. And it was a gratifying day to her, when the son of Sir Walter Scott visited her at her abode, in consequence of an interchange of communications which had taken place between her and his father.† She kept the letters of each friend stitched together in separate volumes. Some of these correspondences, begun early in life, continued for nearly half a century; and it was curious to compare the auto-

\* The late Honourable Mrs. Trench.

† The kindness of a friend, enables me to subjoin a copy of Sir Walter's letter to Mrs. (erroneously directed to Miss) Leadbeater. It was written in reply to a poetical address, wherein she had invited him to undertake some work, illustrative of Ireland.

Madam, I am honoured by your beautiful verses and beg your acceptance of my most respectful thanks. You do me great honour in supposing me able to celebrate a nation in which I am so much interested.

\* Colonel Maurice Keatinge, Author of "The True History of the Conquest of Mexico," from the Spanish of Bernal Diaz; "Travels through France and Spain to Morocco;" and "Memoria sulle Operazioni Eridane triche eseguite in Firenze." The last, as its title imports, is in the Italian Language.

graphs of the same individual at different periods, and to mark the gradations between the full, firm characters, inscribed by the vigorous hand of youth, and the palsied and almost illegible symbols traced by the faltering hand of age. Many of her own epistolary productions are characterized by a rich vein of humour, but the specimens which I possess are too local for citation.

But Mary Leadbeater left one manuscript after her, as unique among literary works as she was herself among the children of men. "The Annals of Ballitore"—the simple record of events that occurred within the compass of a few acres, and almost within the bosom of one family—stands, perhaps, unrivalled as a faithful depository of interesting anecdotes, and a treasure of really christian sentiments. I advance this, not as my own unsupported opinion, but as that of several competent and fastidious judges, unacquainted with the annalist, and unbiassed in her favour; and I would appeal, in particular, to the Society of Friends, among whom a duplicate copy of the manuscript has been widely circulated, whether that opinion is exaggerated.

I have heard it more than once observed, with something like censure, that the works of Mary Leadbeater, although breathing the purest morality, are not written in an actually religious spirit. That this did not arise from the absence of religious principle, I can, I think, satisfactorily prove. I will first cite the words of one who was admitted to the inmost recesses of her thoughts—who formed, as it were, part of her own identity:—"Great diffidence of herself, as well as deep veneration for sacred things, caused herseldom to speak on religious subjects; yet she had an admirable method of awakening pious feelings in very young minds, or giving them the proper bias. 'How often,' says one of her children, 'has she told me of the all-seeing eye that watched over us, and that our heavenly Father would be best pleased by our love and gratitude.' I have, by accident, laid my hands upon a letter, written during the rebellion of 1798; where we see how she was supported, in time of great danger and trial, by a thorough dependence upon superhuman aid, and that a deep sense of religion was interwoven with her thoughts. 'Never was there a time when all dependence upon human help was more fully shaken, and faith and patience more necessary. We cannot rejoice, though we may tremble at our escape; for all rejoicing seems over, and our lives still appear to us in great jeopardy. Yet I believe many of us dare not wish things otherwise, as to our own particulars; for this terrible shaking of our earth may be for our everlasting good; and, if we be favoured to attain resignation, perhaps preservation may be added.'"

On opening a few letters forming part of a correspondence which I had the happiness of

as Ireland. Whether I shall ever strike the harp again my graver occupations render very doubtful but should it so happen I will not fail to consider carefully the hint you have favoured me with, especially should it ever be in my power to visit Ireland. From the mode of dating your letter I conclude I am addressing a lady of a religious profession for whose simplicity of manners and purity of morals I have had from infancy the most deep respect which adds to the sense of obligation with which I subscribe myself your honoured and

Edinburgh  
12 March 1811.

Very humble servant  
WALTER SCOTT.

The punctuation, &c. in the original, is exactly as given above.

maintaining with her for many years, I find the following passages:

"The heart which depends on Providence will not be disappointed in its trust. 'Seek first the kingdom of heaven, and all things necessary will be added.' When Job could say, 'I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee, wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes;' then it was, after this humiliation, that 'the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than the beginning.'"

"Dost thou think we could know each other in a future state? This is a mystery which we should not endeavour to pry into."

Speaking of the celebrated Sword-song of Körner, the German poet, she says:—"But the Sword-song should be burnt—burnt to ashes, I say. Why make a picture of war so completely fascinating? What an effect must that admirable poem have on young, ardent minds! How early was that noble creature sacrificed to false glory!—he who might have been now diffusing delight around him! Oh, when shall war be no more learned?—When shall the evils of slavery end?—When shall righteousness cover the earth?—When shall our minds be fitted for that place—'where all is peaceful, all is pure?'"

Again, speaking of one who fell a sacrifice to the laborious unremitted duties of a christian pastor, she writes thus: "Thy account of poor M.....'s death brought tears into my eyes, and Charles Wolfe's brought sorrow to my heart. I wished, while I read it, that it might not have been the author of those exquisite lines, 'The Burial of Sir John Moore'—for I grudged so much genius to the grave; but it is he who has laid down his head. Yet, why regret? When such a death is more glorious, more desirable than a life adorned with all that fame could bestow."

I shall conclude this *apology* for the religious character of Mary Leadbeater, (understanding the term in Bishop Watson's sense,) by citing the conclusion of her poem, entitled "Ballitore," which, being dated 1778, when she was much under twenty, shews that even in early youth she was impressed with religious feeling:

"But where are all these blessings found,  
Unless by thee, Religion, crowned?  
O, be thou first to gain my breast;  
And be it worthy of the guest!  
Content and innocence appear,  
Celestial maid, when thou art here.  
Thou raisest contemplation's eye  
To seek the blest abodes on high:  
Our friendships formed by thee endure;  
'Tis thou our blessings canst secure;  
Thou bidst our passions all subside:  
Be thou my guardian and my guide!  
Then, in this sweet sequestered shade,  
More lovely by thy presence made,  
Remote from envy, care, and strife,  
Calm will I pass my quiet life;  
Taste purer joys when these are o'er,  
And lay my bones in Ballitore."†

G. D.

† Chance has led me to the mention of another admirable friend, a native of the same county with Mary Leadbeater—Kildare; and who, of all persons I have ever known, (for Pestalozzi was not of the number,) most nearly resembled her. On the harmony subsisting between the characters of this inestimable pair, I should be tempted to expatiate, were justice not already done to him, in a work ("Remains of the Rev. Charles Wolfe,") edited by the present Archdeacon of Clogher. It is a curious fact, that a well known print of Schiller, bears a strong resemblance to this lamented Irish poet. This print is considered to be a correct likeness. The features are, at least, very similar to those of one of the German dramatist's sons, a jurist of Cologne, whom I saw at Weimar, a short time before the curious ceremony took place there—the solemn deposition of his father's skull in the public library.

‡ Her wish, or rather prophecy, has been realized: she calmly passed a quiet life, and her bones are laid in her native village.

## REVIEWS OF BOOKS.

*Travels through Central Africa to Timbuctoo; and across the Great Desert to Morocco, performed in the years 1824—1828.*—By René Caillié.—2 vols. large 8vo. vol. 1.—London, Colburn and Bentley, 1830.

AFRICA is the quarter of the world to which attention, for the purpose of geographical discovery, has been chiefly directed in the nineteenth century. It was but the other day that we had occasion to consider the history of that fatal expedition in which Clapperton, and all his associates perished; and Lander his servant, and indeed his faithful friend, alone survived to tell the tidings. Within the last few weeks, the same Lander, accompanied by his brother, sailed from Spithead, under the auspices of Government, in a merchant vessel, bound for Cape Coast Castle. They carry with them a letter from the Secretary of State, addressed to the captain of the first King's ship they may chance to fall in with, off the west coast of Africa, containing instructions to convey them to Badagry, and to present them to Adolee, the king of that country, as persons authorized by the British Government to pursue their researches in Africa.

From Badagry they are to proceed to Kaptunga, thence to Boussa, where Park perished; and trace, if possible, the Niger to its termination. We need scarcely say, that Laing's hypothesis as to the termination of the Niger, namely that it flowed into the river Volta, has been already disproved by Captain Clapperton.

We have in the volume now before us, the narrative of a Frenchman, of still lower rank in life than Lander, who, with very little aid beyond his own slender resources, voluntarily undertook, and, if his story may be trusted, successfully prosecuted, a journey through a large unknown tract of Africa, including the much-talked-of city of Timbuctoo. It is, we may presume, still freshly remembered by our readers, that Timbuctoo had been previously visited by our countryman, (for in the investigation of literary and scientific subjects at least, we may venture to consider Great Britain almost equally with Ireland, as our country,) Major Laing, who remained there upwards of five weeks, being kindly received, and for that length of time well treated, by the Governor.

In a letter to our Consul at Tripoli, during this period of his stay in the city, and dated at Timbuctoo, the 21st of September, 1826, he writes:—

"I have no time to give you any account of Timbuctoo, but shall briefly state that, in every respect except in size, (which does not exceed four miles in circumference,) it has completely met my expectations. Kabra is only five miles distant, and is a neat town, situated on the very margin of the river. I have been busily employed during my stay, searching the records in the town, which are abundant, and in acquiring information of every kind; nor is it with any common degree of satisfaction that I say my perseverance has been amply rewarded."

At the end of about five weeks, however, from his arrival, an order came from the Sultan Laboo, or as Laing himself affirms, from Bello, to the Governor of Timbuctoo, commanding the stranger to be forthwith sent away. He was sent away, and under the guidance of a person by whom, within three days after he left the city, he was treacherously murdered.